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Salt Lake City, UT
Permit No. 4563

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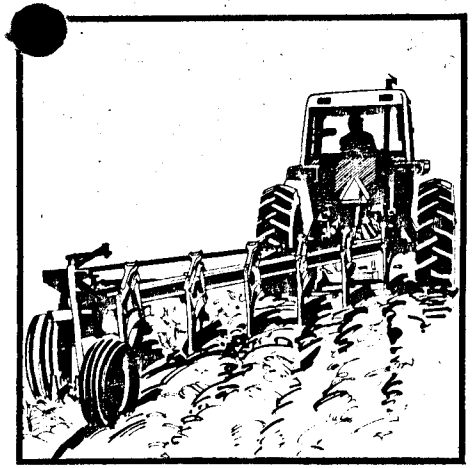
For people whose living relies on Utah land, water and resources

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 10 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1985 PUBLISHED EVERY TWO WEEKS PRICE $1



Harvesting the benefits

Farmers will be harvesting the benefits of a salinity control program that the federal Soil Conservation Service is proposing for the Hancock Cove area. The $1.4 million plan would reduce the salt leaching by 65 percent while increasing crop production by 30 percent.

..... **Page W-2**

Inside

The Provo River drainage above Deer Creek Dam will be monitored for water quality under a multi-government agreement.

"Free from contamination" or "contamination spreading"

KCC press reports contradictory

While *USA Today* was reporting "water in 80 square miles east of Kennecott's Bingham Mine is free from contamination from nearby copper mines," a memo circulating among hydrologists working for the state this month cited "a serious potential water pollution problem for the Salt Lake Valley" caused by the mine.

The *USA Today* item, which appeared in the "Across the USA" section on November 12, was gleaned from an earlier article in *The Salt Lake Tribune* authored by Russell Weeks and published November 11. It said, "Water quality . . . should remain good enough to allow continued population and employment growth" in its first paragraph.

"The *Tribune* story certainly contradicts information I have," said Larry Scanlan, manager of the state compliance program at the Bureau of Public Water Supplies. "It is hard to say where conclusions like that can be drawn from."

On the same day as the *Tribune* report, the *Deseret News* published a contradicting report which said, "Kennecott's mining operations have contaminated groundwater in isolated areas near the Bingham Mine, and the contamination appears to be spreading very slowly eastward toward nearby communities in the Salt Lake Valley."

Both stories were based on a groundwater study funded by Kennecott and overseen by state and county health officials. The study was released at a meeting attended by reporters from both newspapers.

A few days prior to the *Tribune* story, Scanlan wrote a memo to Joel Hebdon, state engineering hydrologst who sits on a joint committee to audit water contamination in the aquifers near Kennecott's mine. Scanlan wrote to inform Hebdon of a recent well sample test done near Kennecott.

"The well was drilled with the intent to use it for culinary purposes and industrial uses by the South Valley Water Reclamation Facility," Scanlan wrote. Water from the well was sent to the state health laboratory for chemical analysis, and Scanlan said the results were "quite alarming."

"Because manganese exceeds the drinking water limit by a factor of 246 and because cadmium exceeds the drinking water limit by a factor of eight, this inadvertent discovery indicates a serious potential water pollution problem for the Salt Lake Valley if this is a recharge area," Scanlan wrote.

Hebdon was nonplussed by Scanlan's data.

Continued on Page W-7

***Larry Scanlan**, manager of the compliance program for the state Bureau of Public Water Supplies, said a serious potential water pollution problem exists near Kennecott's Bingham Mine, despite a recent article in* USA Today, *which said the area was "free from contamination."*

Mandatory hook-ups nixed for Maeser

Uintah County commissioners have vetoed an ordinance which would require residents to

Nonenforcement of this rule has created a financial hardship for Maeser district, Mc-

levy of any water or sewer district in Ashley Valley.

may be cause n rangelands

malaise could be caused by many different pathogens: insects, bacteria, virus, or soil moisture conditions that resulted from above average snow and rainfall the past three years.

No one has a good understanding of the very complex situation that is causing many of these shrubs to die, according to Boyer. In many areas, it appears to be insects and in some areas there appears to be root rot fungi. Research is needed because, while it may be that nothing can be done to stop the situation, experts should at least know why it is occurring. Although livestock grazing is sometimes blamed for vegetative changes, in this instance, dieoff is occurring on some ranges that have not been grazed for about 40 years.

The BLM has asked ranchers to make adjustments in grazing operations for this winter in some of the areas devasted by grasshoppers earlier this year as well as in areas where there has been a loss of valuable shrubs from this unknown cause.

KCC reports

Continued from Page W-1

"We expected water of about that quality in the area, although maybe not quite that dirty," he said. "JMM (James M. Montgomery Engineers) should have expected bad quality water there because of the history of tests in that area."

Indeed, Bob Ramsey of JMM said his company knew the water quality might be bad at the well site, but state law compelled South Valley to seek well water to supply the plant.

"We were surprised that it was quite that high in contaminants," Ramsey admitted. "But we knew the quality would be bad." He said South Valley might end up trucking culinary water to the site. He also said Scanlan's memo "blows the whole thing out of proportion."

Not so, said Ken Bousfield, an engineer who works with Hebdon on the Kennecott monitoring committee. "The Scanlan memo asks questions that deserve answers."

Bousfield said that although shallow groundwater samples have shown varying levels of contamination near the mine, the deeper aquifers have been relatively clean.

"The South Valley sample comes from the grey area between the shallow and the deep aquifers," said Bousfield. "It is significant because of the depth at which it was taken and because of its distance from the mine when compared to other, closer dirty samples."

He said the well sample raises "a lot more questions than it answers."

Kennecott spokesman Terry Vandell said she found "several technically invalid points in the memo," and planned to bring them to the next meeting of the advisory committee investigating water quality. "It made me very angry."

Vandell stands by the *Tribune* story. In it, Weeks reported that in the 80 square miles east of Kennecott's Bingham Mine, the main, and deepest, aquifer shows minimal contamination from the mine or other sources. Purity could be due to a layer of silt and clay and tightly packed soils, the story said.

Vandell told *The Tribune* that two private wells a mile from the mine's old evaporation ponds showed increased solids and sulfates, but that Kennecott's own production well and private wells near Copperton and Riverton showed no effect from the mining operations.

She also said that sulfate from dumps and reservoirs was slowly seeping eastward through the upper aquifer at a rate of 200 feet per year.

The study indicates that increases in chlorides in the water table may have been caused by flooding in previous years. The chemicals could have been flushed to the surface. She also said other mines have contributed significantly to contamination of the aquifer near Kennecott.

Kennecott suspected groundwater pollution

Well sample

The chemical analysis indicates the following elements exceed Utah drinking water standards:

Substance	Concentration	Utah Drinking water standard
Dissolved solids	4360/mg/l	1000 mg/l
Ph	5	6.5-8.5
Fluoride	5.18 mg/l	2.0 mg/l
Sulphate	3000 mg/l	500 mg/l
Turbidity	75 NTU	5.0 NTU
Cadmium	85 ug/l	10 ug/l
Copper	12.7 mg/l	1.0 mg/l
Total iron	1.19 mg/l	.3 mg/l
Manganese	12.30 mg/l	0.05 mg/l
Zinc	1.10 mg/l	4 mg/l

Hotsprings right